

**From:** Paul Douglas [pldouglas33@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 31, 2007 8:40 PM  
**To:** MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov  
**Subject:** [MLPA Comments] MLPA comments

Please see attached comments on the MLPA process.

Thank you,

Paul Douglas, MD

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## A Case for No Take Zones

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in regards to the MLPA program of proposed marine reserves and recent CEQA documents made available for public comment.

I am first and foremost a lover of the ocean. I am an avid fisherman, but I also appreciate the ocean in many other ways, including surfing and diving. I have worked in the past in commercial fishing. I have a long family history of commercial fishermen. I have Bachelor's and Master's degrees from UC Santa Barbara in aquatic biology. I no longer work in these fields, but instead spend long hours working in hospitals. I look forward to the times when I can go fishing way more than I ever used to. Fishing means the world to me. I mention these things so you know where I am coming from.

I have been observing the MLPA process for years. I have a pretty good understanding of the current state of the process, and as well, the current state of California's marine environments including the health of its fisheries. I know that many of our state's marine resources are depleted to unprecedented levels. Others are less depleted. I would summarize the goals of the MLPA as "conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of our marine resources", put simply. At the same time, the goal is to "minimize[e] adverse socioeconomic impacts" as it is implemented.

I support the concept of having a combination of reserves, parks, and conservation areas, so that there are areas that are essentially pristine and untouched (reserves), as well other areas which allow fishing. I think that No-Take areas which allow recreational fishing are a really important component to this whole process. As such, they would not conflict with the goals set out by the MLPA regarding conservation and restoration, but at the same time also are compatible with its goal of minimizing adverse economic impacts.

As you are no doubt aware, sportfishing is a big deal economically throughout coastal California. Fishing licenses, fishing gear, boats, lodging, etc. are all a part of it. The more areas that become "off limits" to fishing the fewer people will be out there fishing. This will affect a lot of people in a lot of ways from an economic standpoint. Further, more off-limits areas will mean more fishermen will be confined to specific areas – increasing fishing pressure there.

I feel that we should be encouraging fishing, not discouraging it. But by that I do not equate "fishing" with "taking". Clearly, everyone on all sides of this issue must compromise for the good of the resources. Everyone, including fishermen, wants healthy marine ecosystems. On the part of the fishermen, they (we) need to start thinking differently about fishing. In our father's/grandfather's time it was about going out and harvesting a bunch of fish. Those days are over.

Please strongly consider the importance of No-Take areas in this process. For every one fisherman that actually takes the time to put his/her concerns in writing, there are thousands of others out there that feel the same. Please remember that fishing does not always mean harvesting. Encouraging a broader system of catch and release fishing is the best way for us to allow people to fish and at the same time help restore our depleted marine resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

Sincerely,

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